

REMARKS

Summary of the Amendment

Upon entry of the above amendment, claims 1-7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, 17, 20-25 and 28-30 will have been canceled and claim 19 will have been amended, and claim 31 will have been added. Accordingly, claims 14, 15, 18, 19 and 31 will be pending with claims 14, 18 and 19 being in independent form.

Summary of the Official Action

In the instant Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, 17, 20-25 and 28-30 over the art of record. Finally, the Examiner indicated that claims 14, 15 and 18 were allowed and that claim 19 contains allowable subject matter and would be allowed if presented in independent form. By the present amendment and remarks, Applicant submits that the rejections have been overcome, and respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action and allowance of the present application.

Acknowledgment of Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant acknowledges and appreciates the Examiner's indication that claims 14, 15 and 18 are allowed and that claim 19 contains allowable subject matter and would be allowable if presented in independent form. As claim 19 is herein being presented in independent form consistent with the Office Action of July 12, 2006 (which was the Examiner's first indication of claim 19 containing allowable subject matter), Applicant requests that claim 19 be indicated to be allowed. Furthermore, new claim 31 depends from allowable claim 19 and is directed to the feature added to claim 16 in the Amendment

filed October 12, 2006.

Accordingly, as all of the rejected claims have been canceled and as the application now only contains claims which are believed to be allowed/allowable, Applicant requests that a Notice of Allowance be issued in the instant application so that the case can proceed to issuance.

The Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is moot

Claims 1-6, 9, 10, 12, 13 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,350,452 issued to REMPE et al.

While Applicant disagrees that the above-noted claims are properly rejected over this document, Applicant submits that this rejection is not moot inasmuch as the above-noted claims have been canceled.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the above-noted rejection is requested.

The Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) are moot

Over Rempe alone

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,350,452 issued to REMPE et al. alone.

While Applicant disagrees that the above-noted claim is properly rejected over this document, Applicant submits that this rejection is not moot inasmuch as the above-noted claim has been canceled.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the above-noted rejection is requested.

Over McIntyre '468 alone

Claims 16, 17, 21-24 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,725,468 issued to McIntYRE alone.

While Applicant disagrees that the above-noted claims are properly rejected over this document, Applicant submits that this rejection is not moot inasmuch as the above-noted claims have been canceled.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the above-noted rejection is requested.

Over McIntyre '468 with McIntyre '204

Claim 25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,725,468 issued to McIntYRE in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,595,204 issued to McIntYRE.

While Applicant disagrees that the above-noted claim is properly rejected over these documents, Applicant submits that this rejection is not moot inasmuch as the above-noted claim has been canceled.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the above-noted rejection is requested.

Over McIntyre '468 with Rempe

Claims 16, 17, 20-24 and 28-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McIntYRE '468 in view of REMPE.

While Applicant disagrees that the above-noted claims are properly rejected over these documents, Applicant submits that this rejection is not moot inasmuch as the above-

noted claims have been canceled.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the above-noted rejection is requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that none of the references of record, either taken alone or in any proper combination thereof, anticipate or render obvious the Applicant's invention, as recited in each of the pending claims. The applied references of record have been discussed and distinguished, while significant claimed features of the present invention have been pointed out.

Further, any amendments to the claims which have been made in this response and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Authorization is hereby given to refund excess payments and charge any additional fee necessary to have this paper entered to Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

Respectfully submitted,
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